(b) and (c) Designated airlines of more than 35 countries are presently having flying rights to Kolkata. Decision regarding actual operations are, however, taken by them on the basis of their commercial judgement.

Overstaffing in IA and AI

2686. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the cadre-wise overstaff position of Indian Airlines and Air India and the steps taken by the management to deal with the situation including that of voluntary/premature retirement;

(b) the number of employees who applied for voluntary/premature retirement during the last two years and till October, 2002 indicating the number of applications rejected with case-wise reasons for rejection; and

(c) the steps taken for preventing outflow of skilled manpower and recruiting young talent to improve the performance level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) According to airlines, there is no overstaffing. A number of activities which are out-sourced by foreign airlines are undertaken inhouse by the two airlines in view of local labour laws. However, Air India and Indian Airlines have jointly appointed a Consultant to formulate a long term business plan for the two airlines. The Consultant will, *inter-alia*, study the human resources aspect of the two airlines as well. The Consultant will submit their report within six months.

Voluntary Retirement Scheme in respect of Air India & Indian Airlines is yet to be finalised. However, in Air India 69 employees have voluntarily retired *w.e.f.* 01st April, 2000 to 31st October, 2002. In Indian Airlines, 87 employees have voluntarily retired during the last two years *w.e.f.* 01st November, 2000 to 31st October, 2002. The requests of 5 employees in Indian Airlines were not acceded to as in 4 cases, the Medical Board had found them fit to continue in job and another 1 case was rejected due to the shortage of staff.

(c) Manpower policy in this regard will be finalised after the recommendations of the consultant are received.

Operation of International Flights from Hyderabad

2687. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Central Government to operate one direct flight between Hyderabad and Dubai in view of heavy demand from Andhra Pradesh NRIs;

(b) If so, whether Government would agree to the request;

(c) by when such flights would operate; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (d) Following airlines are presently connecting Hyderabad to Dubai:—

Emirates : 8 services/week

Indian Airlines: 7 services/week

Air services from Raipur

2688. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan to introduce air services to link Raipur with Hyderabad, Goa, Bangalore and Kolkata or with other cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for not introducing the same in view of utilisation of the desolate airports and passenger amenities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Indian Airlines has presetly no plans to link Raipur with Hyderabd, Goa, Bangalore and Kolkata or with other cities.

(b) Does not arise.